

April 2023 | ISSUE #19

# Patient and Family Advisory Council

Cuthbert Lab & Oncology Outcomes

## Welcome

Oncology Outcomes held its inaugural annual retreat this April in Canmore, AB.

We kicked off the retreat with a review of the team's milestones over the last few years, followed by a walkthrough of the equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) initiatives we have implemented over the last few months. As a group we re-aligned on our digital presence strategy and discussed the areas of improvement for our current O2 website. A few of our team members presented on their ongoing research and received some wonderful feedback from the wider team. In our last session, we put our heads together to brainstorm ideas for future grants, projects, and initiatives.

Overall, we were able to re-connect and re-calibrate as a team. Having Canmore, Alberta as the backdrop for our retreat only strengthened our "can-more, can-do-more" attitude!



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# Research Highlights

## Oncology Outcomes

The impact of population-based EGFR testing in non-squamous metastatic non-small cell lung cancer in Alberta, Canada

### BACKGROUND

Tyrosine Kinase Inhibitors (TKI) are a class of agents widely used to treat **non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC)**



Few studies have evaluated the impact of the implementation of **molecular diagnostics and testing** at the **population-level**

To ensure that results observed in phase III clinical trials are **mirrored** in the **real world**, molecular testing and targeted therapies must be evaluated at the **population-level**



**STUDY GOAL:** Examine the impact of population-level EGFR testing and treatment on survival outcomes among non-squamous metastatic NSCLC patients in Alberta, Canada from 2004-2020

### METHODS

Patients aged **18+** with a **de novo** diagnosis of **stage IV** (metastatic) **non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC)** and a confirmed **non-squamous cell carcinoma histology** between **Jan 2004** and **Dec 2019**.



Differences between patient outcomes **pre** and **post** **initiation** of **EGFR testing** were evaluated

### RESULTS

Patients diagnosed in the **post-EGFR testing period** had significantly **greater overall survival** than patients diagnosed in the pre-EGFR testing period (HR: 0.81; 95% CI: 0.78-0.85).

6-month, 1-year, and 2-year **mortality rates** significantly **decreased** after the initiation of EGFR testing



### CONCLUSIONS

Among patients who initiated systemic therapy, patients who were **tested** for an EGFR mutation had **improved outcomes** compared to those who were not tested.



Click [here](#) for full article.

## Cuthbert Lab

Patient-reported symptom burden and supportive care needs at diagnosis: a retrospective cohort study

### BACKGROUND

Cancer patients experience a range of **physical and psychological symptoms**, as well as **supportive care needs** at the **onset** of a cancer **diagnosis**.

The evaluation of **Symptom burden** & **Supportive care needs**

at diagnosis is important to

**mitigate** physical psychological morbidity  
**improve** coping treatment compliance

**STUDY GOAL:** Evaluate Patient-reported outcomes (PROs) from the provincial cancer program in Alberta, Canada

### METHODS

Retrospective, population-based cohort study using administrative health data of patients in Alberta, Canada, diagnosed with cancer between January 1, 2016, and October 23, 2017.

Adults who completed PROs (Edmonton Symptom Assessment System, ESAS) and supportive care needs inventory (Canadian Problem Checklist) within  $\pm 60$  days of diagnosis were included. Patients were stratified by tumor types.

### RESULTS

**1310 patients**

51% female

mean age of 64 years

Severity based on ESAS was low for the entire cohort

>50% had a Charlson Comorbidity Index (CCI) score of  $\geq 1$



Prevalence of specific symptoms at diagnosis was **high** (tiredness, pain, anxiety, low well-being)

Common supportive care needs across tumor groups included:

needing more information about cancer  
help communicating with the health care team  
knowing what resources are available



### CONCLUSIONS

Symptom **severity** was generally **low**.



Symptom **prevalence** for certain symptoms was **high**.



**Symptoms and Supportive care needs** at diagnosis **differed** depending on **tumor type**.

Click [here](#) for full article.

# Study

# Recruitment



We continue to actively recruit participants for several studies right now, including:

- ▶ Healthcare Provider and Patient Views on Prescribing Opioids for Cancer Patients. [Poster Link to Share](#)
- ▶ Patients Perspectives of Value Frameworks Used to Guide Oncology Treatment Decisions. [Poster Link to Share](#)

If you think the studies might be relevant to your contacts, please feel free to share the website or poster links. For the additional details on each study click [here](#).

## Coming Up

The next newsletter will release in May 2023.

Previous issues of the PFAC newsletter have been posted online: <https://www.cuthbertlab.com/advisory-council>

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# SAVE THE DATE

MAY 13, 2023

BUMRUN  
CALGARY



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On **May 13th** the annual **Bumrun** will be held in Calgary. The Bumrun is a 5K walk/run founded by Dr. Ian Bookman to raise awareness for colorectal cancer and encourage early screenings. Since 2011, the Bumrun has raised over \$900,000 for colon cancer research, enhancing patient support programs for families living with colon cancer, and raising awareness of colon cancer screening and prevention.

**The 5K run  
to get behind.**



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